

Fair, Rigorous and Aligned Assessments

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How do you **know** if what you **taught** a student has been **learned**?



You see if the student can recall what you taught, do what you taught or show you what you taught.





You gather information.



If you **taught** him basic math skills, you **gather information** on his ability to recall and comprehend basic math skills.

However, if you **taught** him how to apply math skills in a real-world task, you **gather information** about his application of skills in a new or similar scenario.

Then, you analyze results based on the benchmark or standard of what you taught.



Why assess?

- "Educational assessment seeks to determine how well students are learning and is an integral part of the quest for improved education. It provides feedback to students, educators, parents, policy makers, and the public about the effectiveness of educational services."
- -- Knowing what students know: the science and design of educational assessment, Committee on the Foundations of Assessment, Center for Education, Division on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council; James Pellegrino, Naomi Chudowsky, and Robert Glaser, editors, p. 1

How do assessments help teachers?

- Give teachers an external benchmark against which to gauge student learning
- Measure the level of success or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of a course of study by comparing it against some standard or benchmark
- Help teachers identify curricular & instructional adjustments

How do assessments help parents and students?

- Research on student learning shows that students learn best when the expectations for their knowledge and skills are clear
- Standards help provide clear expectations by specifying what students should know and be able to do
- Assessments make these expectations concrete by showing exactly how students should demonstrate what they know and can do

Why change assessments in TN?

- TCAP is a Criterion Referenced Test
- Criterion-Referenced items measure a student's performance according to specific standards, rather than to the performance of other test takers
- Current TCAP test items are directly aligned with the TN Diploma Project Content Standards and State Performance Indicators, not the new TN Academic Content Standards

"Stop asking me if we're almost there. We're nomads for crying out loud!"

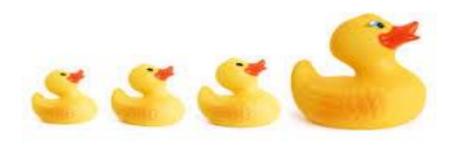


Why change assessments for rigor?

- A study of current U.S. state tests found that very few state test items measure high levels of cognitive challenge
- By contrast, studies of nations that perform well on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have found that those nations place more of an emphasis on performance tasks that measure high-level skills and competencies

Why is alignment critical?

 If student achievement is the goal and that goal is measured by standards-based assessments, the assessments must be aligned with the standards. If there is a disconnect among these elements, student achievement will not be evident and the test may not be valid



Alignment is an ongoing process

- We must teach what is important to learn
- We must assess what is taught
- We must analyze results against the benchmark to see if we are effective
- We must continually realign as needed to ensure students are continuing to achieve and grow



Of course you don't, but you do learn his weight so you can determine what to feed him to get him ready for the blue ribbon at the fair!



Resources

- Benchmarking Learning Systems: Student Performance Assessment in International Context (L. Darling-Hammond)
- Developing Assessments of Deeper Learning: The Costs and Benefits of Using Tests That Help Students Learn (L. Darling-Hammond)
- From Aptitude to Effort: A New Foundation for Our Schools (L. Resnick)
- Knowing What Students Know: The Science and Design of Educational Assessment (National Research Council)
- New Assessments: A Guide for State Policymakers (Alliance for Excellent Education)
- Transformative Assessment (James Popham)
- www.assessment.uconn.edu

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